

## CRONJE SURROUNDED.

Roberts Shells His Camp and Cuts Off Re-enforcements.

## BLOODY BATTLE ON SUNDAY.

Canadians Fell in a Charge on the Boer Position.

Armistice Refused to Cronje, Who Is Making a Desperate Defence—Kitchener Gives Him Half an Hour to Decide on Surrender or Fight to a Finish—General Cronje Says He Will Fight to the Death—Boers Entrenched in a Bend of the Modder and Are Under a Constant Fire From the British Guns—Roberts Defeats and Disperses Boer's Force That Was Coming to Cronje's Relief—British Commander Unwilling to Risk an Assault on the Boer Position and Cronje's Chance Is Held Out Until Substantial Aid Comes From Joubert.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.  
LONDON, Feb. 23.—Gen. Lord Roberts's army has completely surrounded the retreating Boers at Koodoos Rand Drift, and Commandant Cronje is making a splendid defence, which, however, the latest despatches indicate, is a forlorn hope.

The Boers, estimated to number 8,000 men, are entrenched in the bed of the Modder River at a point where the stream makes a sharp bend. They are also occupying the hills on the south bank. The British circle around this position was completed Monday morning by Gen. French's mounted troops, and the brave defenders have since been the target for a terrible fire from all sides.

Nevertheless, when the latest despatch left Gen. Roberts's headquarters at 6:05 o'clock on Wednesday morning, the Boers were still holding their posts with such vigor as to resist the possibility of their being able to find until reinforcements arrive to divert the attention of a large part of the British surrounding force. Their losses have doubtless been severe.

At noon on Monday, according to report, Commandant Cronje sent a messenger asking for an armistice for twenty-four hours. The accounts of this incident, which is not mentioned in the official despatch, vary. One correspondent says the armistice was asked for to enable the Boers to bury their dead.

All the correspondents concur in stating that the request was refused. One says that Gen. Lord Kitchener replied that he would not allow one minute's armistice, but would give the Boers a half hour to consider whether they would surrender unconditionally or fight to a finish.

Eventually, Commandant Cronje, according to the *Daily News* correspondent, sent a messenger to say that he would surrender. The British General sent an answer that he must come to the British camp. Commandant Cronje refused, saying there had been a misunderstanding, and that he would fight to the death.

The bombardment was then reopened. The laager was shelled throughout Monday night, the Maxim guns and rifles resuming their fire at daylight on Tuesday, principally from the north.

The War Office has received the following from Gen. Lord Roberts:

"PAARDEBURG, Feb. 21.—Yesterday afternoon I was satisfied after a careful reconnaissance in force that the enemy's position could not be carried by assault without very heavy loss, which I was most anxious to avoid. I therefore decided to bombard him with artillery and to turn my attention to the enemy's reinforcements. The result was most satisfactory. The Boers were driven off in all directions, losing a good many killed and wounded. We took about fifty prisoners, who state that they arrived from Ladysmith in two days by rail. They say it was our artillery fire that caused them to abandon the kopje which they had been occupying. Our loss was two officers and four men wounded, all slightly."

A despatch to the *Evening News* from Paardeburg, dated Feb. 21, 5:50 P. M., says: "Commandant Cronje has been attempting to relieve Gen. Cronje and there has been severe fighting. Both lost heavily and his commands have been scattered."

## SUNDAY'S BLOODY BATTLE.

Both Sides Suffer Severely in an All-Day Fight at the Drift.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.  
LONDON, Feb. 22.—A news agency despatch from Paardeburg Drift, dated yesterday, says that Commandant Cronje's magnificent night march from Macersfontein, though successful at the beginning, now appears likely to end in disaster. The main body of the enemy is encircled in a death trap. They are hiding in the bed of the Modder River, which is commanded by the British artillery, and are enclosed east and west by the British infantry.

Sunday witnessed a gallant stand by the retreating enemy, who, weary and harassed, still showed a bold front to the British. It is somewhat difficult to explain Sunday's action, in which all the British forces were engaged. Commandant Cronje, although in difficult circumstances, managed to hold his own. On Saturday night the mounted infantry came in touch with the Boer rearguard, driving it back on the main body. On Sunday morning the British renewed the action, but the Boers had entrenched themselves in the bed of the river during the night and prevented a further advance by the mounted infantry in this direction.

Meanwhile the Highland Brigade, comprising the Seaforths, Black Watch and Argyll and Futherlands, advanced from the south bank of the river, while the Essex, Welsh and Yorkshire regiments closed in in a long line, the left of which rested on the river. The whole line was ordered to envelop the enemy, who lined both banks of the river.

The firing was soon heavy. The Boers held a splendid position, commanding the left of the Highland Brigade, which advanced partly up the river bed and partly in the open. While the other regiments swung round to the front the Highland Brigade, being on level ground that was destitute of cover, was exposed to a terrible fire, which obliged the men to lie prone on the ground for the rest of the day. This began at 7:30 o'clock in the morning, and through the dreadful heat and a terrible thunderstorm the men hunk to their position, answering the enemy's fire and shooting steadily.

Meanwhile the rest of the infantry performed their enveloping movement. The Welsh regiment succeeded in seizing the drift, thus completely enveloping the enemy, who throughout fought with splendid courage.

Commandant Cronje's laager was full of wagons loaded with ammunition and stores, which could be plainly seen near the north bank. Col. Smith-Dorrien collected a large body of men, including the Canadians, crossed the river by Paardeburg Drift and advanced toward the laager, which he shelled them vigorously. Here the body made a gallant attempt to charge into the laager, but failed.

The enemy before seizing the western drifts had occupied a kopje on the south bank of the river, running to its edge. The British force was, therefore, cut in two. The enemy holding the kopje possessed one Vickers-Maxim gun and probably one or two other guns.

## THE BRITISH DEATH ROLL.

Up to This Week 105 Officers and 1,512 Men Have Been Killed in Battle.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Feb. 22.—The following report, giving the British losses in South Africa up to Feb. 17, has been issued by the War Office:

Killed—Officers, 105; men, 1,512.  
Wounded—Officers, 397; men, 5,034.  
Missing—Officers, 171; men, 2,440.  
Died from disease—Officers, 13; men, 563.  
Accidentally killed—Officers, 1; men, 12.  
Invalided home—Officers, 54; men, 1,628.  
Total, 11,004.

The Fusiliers who were captured at or missing after the battle of Nicholson's Nek are not included in the above figures.

The War Office also announces, in addition to the previously published statement of the losses at Paardeburg, on Feb. 18, that a captain and three lieutenants were killed.

A list of casualties at Rensburg, Cape Colony, on Feb. 15, is also announced. Eleven men were killed, a lieutenant and forty-four men were taken prisoners and a major, a lieutenant and 100 men are missing. All of these casualties were in the Witwatersrand Regiment.

## NEW HOPE IN LADYSMITH.

Belief in the Town That Relief Will Arrive This Week.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Feb. 22.—The *Morning Post* has received the following from Ladysmith, Feb. 19, by runner to Frere Camp, Feb. 21:

"The health of the garrison has improved wonderfully. The bombardment continues steadily.

"One hundred and thirty Boer wagons trekked northward today. These, it is thought, are the last of the Boers who have been driven from the town. The fact that 400 other wagons trekked in the same direction last week, we imagine that the Boer force has been very slightly reduced.

"Mr. Jameson is doing well. Correspondents Maxwell of the *Standard* and MacHugh of the *Telegraph*, who are sick with dysentery, and Nivenso of the *Chronicle*, who is suffering from sunstroke, are also doing well.

"The general expectation here is that the town will be relieved by the end of the week."

A despatch to the *Times* from Chieveley Camp, dated yesterday says: "The enemy held a naturally strong position on the lower spur of the heights above Colenso.

"Ladysmith, Feb. 22.—While the newspapers reiterate their predictions that Ladysmith will certainly be relieved by the end of the week, the telegrams from Natal do not indicate that Gen. Buller has been able to gain much ground since he captured Hlangwane Hill and the neighboring heights. The Boers, parties of whom have been seen, are still in the Tugela River, seem also to be fortifying new positions to the northward to obstruct further British advances, and there was a general appearance on Wednesday that they were becoming more aggressive.

Another despatch says that on Monday Gen. Cronje asked for an armistice. On Tuesday British guns were bombarding Cronje's position. The despatch adds that "the action was one of the costliest of the war." At the close of the fighting the Boer position was unchanged. The Boers admit a loss of 800.

It is clear that the earlier British attempts to take the position by assault were costly, and a comparison with Gen. Methuen's tactics at Modder River seems entirely justified.

The *Daily News* correspondent says there was much waste of life in attacking on Sunday. Col. Smith-Dorrien's charge on the laager, in which the Canadians showed great gallantry and lost heavily, seems to have been a repetition of the reckless valor displayed in so many previous actions. Gen. Roberts, the correspondent adds, has forbidden a renewal of such charges, and the same result will be achieved without them.

Report That He Has Retired From the Chief Command of the Boer Forces.

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LONDON, Feb. 22.—A despatch from Sterkspruit, twenty-three miles from Pietermaritzburg, says Boer reports state that Gen. Joubert's nerves are unstrung and that he is no longer in chief command of the republican forces.

## ROBERTS PRAISES CANADIANS.

Sends a Message to the Governor General of the Dominion.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

OTTAWA, Ontario, Feb. 22.—The Governor General received today the following telegram from Field Marshal Lord Roberts:

"PAARDEBURG, Orange Free State, Feb. 22.—The Canadian regiment has done admirable service since its arrival in South Africa. I deeply regret the heavy loss it suffered during the fighting on the 18th inst., and beg you will assure the people how much we all admire the gallantry displayed by our Canadian comrades on that occasion.

"The following cable message, received from the British Government, was sent to the Dominion:

"To the Dominion of Canada, from the British Government, London, Feb. 22.—The Dominion of Canada has done admirable service since its arrival in South Africa. I deeply regret the heavy loss it suffered during the fighting on the 18th inst., and beg you will assure the people how much we all admire the gallantry displayed by our Canadian comrades on that occasion."

Another telegram sent at 6:20 P. M. Wednesday says that Commandant Cronje's position is unchanged.

## FIGHTING ACROSS THE TUGELA.

Buller's Advance Guard Engaged With the Boers All Day Wednesday.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

From The Sun's Correspondent With Gen. Buller's Forces.

CHIEVELEY CAMP, Feb. 21, 4 P. M.—On Monday the British troops advanced beyond Blou's farm. The Boers retreated to the south side of the Tugela River and attempted to hold the hills and ridges near Hlangwane Hill, but the British attacked them and they were soon driven from their positions. The Tugela now held all the ground south of the Tugela. Col. Wynne's patrols having entered Colenso township to-day.

On Tuesday the Boers hauled a heavy wagon by hand from a high position on Monte Cristo Hill. The rifle brigades followed them and just as a team of horses were harnessed they shot the animals. The wagon was then abandoned and it fell into the hands of the British. It was found to contain 40,000 rounds of Mauser ammunition.

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## IN KANSAS CITY ON JULY 4.

MEETING PLACE AND DATE OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

Mr. Gorman Reappears as a Leader in National Politics—He Counsels the Democrats to Get Together and Not Make Any One Issue Paramount in the Campaign—Little Said About Silver at the Meeting of the National Committee.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—The Democratic National Committee met today at the City Hotel, Mo., as the meeting place of the National Convention and decided on July 4 as the date. The corridors and lobbies of the Raleigh Hotel overflowed this morning with Democrats from all parts of the United States who had come to attend the meeting of the National Committee.

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## OUR RIGHTS IN CHINA.

Assurances of Some of the Powers Sent Back to Be Made More Definite.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22.—The announcement of Ex-Secretary Barrett in his speech before the Southern Society in New York to-night that the State Department would issue a statement in regard to what it has accomplished by the overtures to European nations and Japan to secure the continuance of American rights in China, correctly represents an intention which the Department will carry out when the proper time arrives. Just how soon the statement will be issued cannot now be told, for the reason that certain communications from governments concerned must be received before the Department will be in a position to explain fully what has been accomplished, but Barrett's declaration that the Department would furnish its explanation to the world within thirty days is regarded as approximately correct.

The speech of Mr. Barrett is an exposition in general terms of what has been accomplished by the United States Government. The original content of the speech, which was a suggestion of the Secretary of State, looked only to the preservation of American treaty rights in those parts of China in possession of European Governments, or within their spheres of influence, or which might come to be so possessed.

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## OPEN DOOR MUST STAY OPEN.

Speech by John Barrett.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

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